

Community Mobilization Strategies and Adults' Participation in Community Development Projects in Southern Senatorial District of Cross River State, Nigeria

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Abstract

This study's main goal was to find out how people's involvement in community development initiatives in Southern Senatorial District of Cross River State, Nigeria, was impacted by the use of community mobilization tactics. A survey research design was used for the investigation. A total sample of 357 respondents, representing 20% of the total population, was chosen using a stratified and purposive selection technique. A designed questionnaire called Community Mobilization Strategies and Participation in Community Development Projects (CMSPCDPQ) served as the primary tool for gathering data. The Cronbach alpha .50 technique was used to determine the instrument's reliability after it was validated by the researcher and measurement and evaluation specialists. The researcher gathered data and tested the hypothesis at the .05 level of significance using both simple and multiple regression analysis. Results indicate that lyrics have a big impact on people's involvement in Southern Senatorial District of Cross River State community development initiatives. Advertisement strategy also has a big impact on people's involvement in community development initiatives in Southern Cross River State, even though advocacy strategy has a greater impact. According to the study, in order for individuals to fully participate in community development initiatives, it is important to support local languages and dialects promoted by community leaders for effective implementation.

Keywords: Community mobilization, Adults' participation, Community development

Introduction

Any development plan may aim to accomplish the goal of mobilizing people for effective participation in community development efforts. Therefore, among other factors, the successful or unsuccessful execution of community development initiatives may rely on the efficient use of institutional, financial, organizational, material, and human resources. It goes without saying that without mobilization, community members cannot come together or participate in the process of community development.

Community development is widely recognized as a process through which members of a community collectively identify their needs, mobilize resources, and take action to improve their social and economic well-being. It is a participatory approach that emphasizes local ownership, empowerment, and sustainability (Saepudin, & Mulyono 2019). Central to this process is community mobilization, which involves organizing, sensitizing, and motivating individuals and groups to actively engage in the planning, implementation, and monitoring of development projects. Effective mobilization ensures that development initiatives are not externally imposed but rather arise from the felt needs and aspirations of the people themselves. In Nigeria, community mobilization has historically played a crucial role in grassroots development. From traditional cooperative societies and age-grade systems to modern community-based organizations, Nigerians have often relied on collective effort to address local challenges such as rural infrastructure, education, healthcare, and agricultural development (Ebekozi, 2013). In particular, mobilization strategies such as town hall meetings, cultural associations, religious platforms, and participatory rural appraisal techniques have been instrumental in galvanizing adult participation in community development initiatives.

According to Lane and Vatanparast (2022), The Southern Senatorial District of Cross River State is known for its socio-cultural diversity, communal spirit, and reliance on collective efforts for rural development. Despite the presence of government and non-governmental interventions, the success of community development projects in this region often depends on the extent to which adults are mobilized and actively engaged. Adults constitute the most active and resourceful segment of the population, possessing the experience, skills, and decision-making power necessary to drive sustainable development. However, variations in participation levels have been observed, with some communities demonstrating strong commitment while others experience apathy, elite capture, or lack of ownership.

Research has shown that the choice and effectiveness of mobilization strategies directly influence the degree of adult participation in community projects (Hannase & Annas 2020). Strategies that foster inclusivity, transparency, and collective decision-making tend to yield higher participation rates, while those that are top-down or politically motivated often face resistance. In the context of Cross River State, understanding which mobilization strategies are most effective is vital to improving participation levels and ensuring the sustainability of community development initiatives. As a result, they join antisocial groups in the community, such as cults, armed robberies, and prostitution. The government at all levels established organizations like the People Empowerment Initiative (PEI) Rural Development Agency in Southern Senatorial District of Cross River State and carried out a number of community development interventions to address this issue. Despite the benefits that come from carrying out community development projects, because some members of our community are too sensitive, may not be subject to investigation and analysis, and are constantly very nervous, timid, and suspicious, which affects participation, some challenges are expected in relation to the successful implementation of community development projects.

The main characteristic of Southern Cross River State's community development programs is the absence of communication between the many stakeholders. Most of the time, development organizations haphazardly put together and carry out community development programmes without first consulting the local population. In both rural and urban areas, community members frequently get disengaged and lack accurate knowledge about community development projects as a result of poor mobilization tactics used to encourage participation. Communities therefore depended on the long-standing custom of indigenous tactics; some of young people lack accurate knowledge about community development initiatives due to poor citizen mobilization brought about by inappropriate use of communication tactics, insufficient advertising, advocacy, funding, and campaigns to encourage community participation. To address issues in the community, governments and non-governmental groups have implemented a number of community development programmes. Due to the community's reliance on indigenous mobilization tactics, information about community development initiatives is lacking.

In light of this, this study examines how community mobilization tactics such as advocacy, songs, advertisements, campaigns, and rallies as well as mass education tactics, affect people's involvement

in community development initiatives in Southern Cross River State. According to the notion, which was put up by Mahatma, the active participation of people of a defined community in the planning, execution, and assessment of projects is the fundamental component of participatory development. It goes on to say that although there are several ways to become involved, integrating local expertise into the project implementation process is a major goal. Participation becomes self-initiated when prospective beneficiaries participate in decision-making as well. Since every member of the community participates in the planning and execution of community development projects, the theory is pertinent to the research. Beneficiaries participate in decision-making as well, and preparation becomes self-initiated, which makes the theory distinctive. According to this view, every member of the community is significant, particularly throughout the process of community growth. Self-help initiatives are encouraged in the community when community members actively participate in development efforts. The theory is applicable to research projects in spite of the critique. It promotes widespread involvement in community development initiatives. Everyone in the community benefits as a result. Additionally, the theory views a variety of community associations as the most effective means of encouraging community members to participate in community development initiatives. Additionally, these associations should provide the necessary understanding to ensure that the community's view of community development projects does not clash with the planner's, allowing for effective community engagement in such programs. According to this theory, everyone in the community should have equal opportunities.

Community Mobilization Strategy (CDPs) in rural Africa encompasses various initiatives aimed at fostering sustainable development. These programs include infrastructure development, healthcare provision, education enhancement, and livelihood improvement (Tirivanhu, 2023). Factors contributing to the success of CDPs in rural Africa include localized institutional actors, which have positively impacted smallholder irrigation scheme performance in South Africa (Mwadzingeni et al., 2020). Furthermore, effective training programs for community-based rehabilitation workers have strengthened accessible rural rehabilitation practice, contributing to the success of healthcare initiatives (Ned et al., 2020). Community development programs play a crucial role in enhancing educational attainment through various means. Infrastructure development in education, such as the achievement

of facilities and infrastructure standards in vocational high schools, has been shown to positively impact educational outcomes (Sugiyono, 2021).

In their study on the relationship between lyrics strategy and community development project engagement, Adesina and Ferrara (2012) included 320 respondents from Kwara State's OdoOwa Local Government. Data was analyzed using the Pearson Product Movement Correlation analysis, with questionnaires serving as the primary data sources. The results demonstrated that people's involvement in community development initiatives and the mobilization of lyrics strategies were significantly correlated.

Abiodun (2022) conducted an empirical study on connection between community development project involvement and mobilization using lyrics technique was conducted by Conducted a study on Mobilisation strategies (Development information network, community education, popular theatre and age grade) and project partnership (initiation, planning and designing, funding, execution, monitoring and evaluation) predict sustainability of self-help projects in Oyo, Ogun and Ondo states of Southwestern Nigeria. The survey research design of the ex-post facto type was adopted. One thousand, two hundred and seventeen respondents were selected using proportional stratified random sampling technique. These comprise Political / Opinion leaders, 326; Religious leaders, 241; Youth leaders, 270; non-governmental organisation officials, 102; Community members, 152 and Change-agents, 126. They jointly accounted for 16% to the variance of the dependent measure. Relatively, Mobilisation strategies contributed as follows: Development information network ($\beta = .244$); community education ($\beta = .157$); popular theatre ($\beta = -.108$); and age grade ($\beta = .090$). While project partnership factors ranked in the following order: project initiation ($\beta = 0.407$; $t=13.804$ P) the result of the study signifies a positive relationship between mobilization strategy and projet partnership.

Kwashabawa (2020) conducted a study on advocacy strategy in relation to community participation in decision-making in North-West zone, Nigeria. Two research questions and a hypothesis guided the study. The research design used for the study was correlational survey with a population of 21,230 Universal Basic Education (UBE) schools and their School-Based Management Committees (SBMCs) in the North- west Zone. A sample of 370 basic schools was selected from four states using proportionate stratified and systematic sampling procedures. The study found that, advocacy strategy was moderately effective in North-west Zone basic schools, and that, there was no significant

relationship between advocacy strategy and community participation in decision-making in the basic schools. Meaning that, advocacy strategy was not a predictor of community participation in decision-making in basic schools.

Kumar (2022) stated that, participation means different things to different people. The way participation is defined largely depends upon the context and background in which participation is applied (Laah, Adefila & Yusuf, 2023). Reid (2021) viewed participation in terms of power sharing and organized efforts to increase control over school resources and programmes. In this sense, participation is viewed as an active process in which the participants take initiatives and actions that are stimulated by their own thinking and deliberations over which they exert effective control. Members of the community can participate in decision-making as well. Talking drums raise awareness about how, when, and where to get involved in community development initiatives. The drummer uses a talking drum to get everyone in the village to attend an urgent meeting whenever there is a conflict. They are able to learn about community events as a result. The death of an elder, particularly a traditional ruler, may be announced in some communities using a talking drum. The drummer always uses proverbs to spread knowledge. Members of the community are pleased to be a part of a group. In other words, it fosters a feeling of inclusion. He also emphasized that talking drums can be used to effectively rally the community for the "yam festival," particularly in Benue state and Western Nigeria.

Madueke et al., (2022), community development programs have shown effectiveness in poverty reduction and livelihood improvement through various interventions, including income generation activities, leadership development, and education programs. These findings underscore the importance of comprehensive community development approaches that address economic, social, and educational aspects to achieve sustainable poverty reduction and livelihood improvement. George & Nafiu (2020), Community participation in project development is about ordinary citizens assessing needs and participating in project planning and budgeting, implementation and monitoring. This improves public resource management and reduces corruption. Thus, making civil servants and political leaders accountable to the people. Akinsolu and Onibon (2022) stated that a good advocacy strategy could challenge existing situation, establish a cause/issue, influence relevant authority, sustain pressure, promote desired group interest, and bring about change. Advocacy strategy can bring about changes in education for quality outputs. People only come together as a community when they have access to

information. He clarifies that locals like information and that it allows them to take part in community development initiatives. Additionally, it forces them to give their fair share to the community's expansion and advancement. He goes on to say that if the proper approach is taken, the community can come together or take part in community development initiatives.

Objectives of the study

1. To examine the relationship between Lyrics strategy and adult participation in community.
2. To access the impact of relationship between Advocacy strategy and adult participation in community.
3. To identify the challenges and relationship between Advertisement strategy and adult participation in community.

Hypotheses

1. Lyrics strategy do not significantly influence adult participation in community development projects in Southern Senatorial District of Cross River State.
2. Advocacy strategy do not significantly influence adult participation in community development projects in Southern Senatorial District of Cross River State.
3. Advertisement strategy do not significantly influence adult participation in community development projects in Southern Senatorial District of Cross River State

Methodology

The survey correlational research design was used in the study. Numerous academic disciplines have made extensive use of this design, a quantitative research methodology. A survey research design is a quantitative research technique that uses self-report measures, like questionnaires or interviews, to gather data from a sample of individuals. This design is perfect for researching a population's attitudes, beliefs, actions, and traits. The population for the study consisted of 7140 community members. A total sample of 357 respondents representing 20% of the population, was selected using a stratified and purposive selection technique. A structured questionnaire called Community Mobilization Strategies and Participation in Community Development Projects (CMSPCDPQ) served as the primary tool for gathering data. The Cronbach alpha technique was used to determine the instrument's reliability after

it was validated by the researcher and measurement and evaluation specialists. A suitable coding schedule was used to collect data in order to prepare it for statistical analysis. A modified four-point Likert scale was used to score section B of the instrument, which measured community mobilization tactics and people's involvement in community development projects. Section A of the instrument collected demographic information from the respondents and was scored on a nominal level.

Table 1

Cronbach alpha estimates of the research instrument sub-scales (n = 50)

S/N	Variables	No. Of items	X	SD	A
1.	Lyrics	5	10.34	3.65	0.88
2.	Advocacy	5	8.87	3.54	0.76
3.	Advertisement	5	8.17	3.65	0.93
6.	Participation in community development projects	10	9.54	3.12	0.87

Table 2: Coding schedule for the instrument

S/N	Variables	Code	Column
1.	Title	001- 578	1
2.	ID. No		
	Sex	Male	1
		Female	2
			4
3.	Age	20-29 years	1
		30-39 years	2
		40 years and above	3
			5
4.	Marital status	Single	1
		Married	2
		Divorced	3
		Widow	4
		Widower	5
			6
5.	Resident	Urban centre	1
		Rural area	2
			7
6.	Occupation	Civil servant	1
		Self-employed	2
		Farmer	3
			8

		Retired	4
		Unretired	5
7.	Lyric as a mobilization strategy	Add score items 1-5 On section B of the instrument	10
8.	Advocacy as a mobilization strategy	Add score items 6-10 On section B of the instrument	12
9.	Advertisement as a mobilization strategy	Add score items 11-15 On section B of the instrument	14
10	Participation in community development projects	Add score items 16-25 On section B of the instrument	20

Results

Table 3: Descriptive statistics of the variables

Variables	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Lyrics Strategy	341	15.1575	3.2211
Advocacy strategy	341	16.8069	4.0213
Advertisement Strategy	341	15.2288	3.2322
Participation in Community Dev	341	21.4895	7.4211

Hypothesis one

In Southern Cross River State, lyrics strategy has little influence on people's involvement in community development initiatives. Participation in community development initiatives, as measured over time, is the dependent variable in this hypothesis, whereas the use of lyrics strategy is the independent variable. Simple regression analysis was employed to verify this hypothesis, and the results, as shown in Table 4, indicated that $R=.203$, indicating a positive correlation between the adoption of lyrics methods and community development project involvement. In other words, people are more likely to participate in community development initiatives when these tactics are used more frequently. Subsequent research revealed that the Adj $R^2 = .040$, meaning that the contribution of lyrics techniques can account for 4.0%

of the variances in people's involvement in community development projects. Moreover, a careful examination of the analysis of variance (ANOVA) table revealed that ($F= 40.98$, $p<.05$) even if the percentage impact of the use of lyrics methods was minor. Because (.05) is greater than p (.000). This suggests that people's involvement in community development initiatives and the use of lyrics tactics have a big impact. The null hypothesis is thus disproved.

Table 4: Regression analysis of the relationship between the use of lyrical methods and involvement in community development initiatives

Source of variation	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	2087.410	1	2087.410	40.982	.000 ^b
Residual	48388.485	399	50.935		
Total	50475.895	340			

$R=.203$, $R^2 = .040$, Adj $R^2 = .041$, Std Error= 7.136

Hypothesis two

In Southern Cross River State, advocacy tactics have little effect on people's involvement in community development initiatives. The use of advocacy strategies is the hypothesis's independent variable, while community development project involvement, as assessed over time, is its dependent variable. Simple regression analysis was employed to verify this hypothesis, and the results, as shown in Table 5, indicated that $R=.101$, indicating a weakly positive correlation between the employment of advocacy techniques and community development project involvement. In other words, the more people use advocacy tactics, the more they participate in community development initiatives.

Subsequent research revealed that the Adj $R^2 = .138$, meaning that the use of advocacy tactics can account for 13.8% of the variances in people's involvement in community development programs. Furthermore, despite the minor percentage contribution of advocacy strategy use, a careful examination of the analysis of variance (ANOVA) table revealed that ($F= 5.905$, $p<.05$). Considering that p (.002) is smaller than p (.05). This suggests that the use of lobbying tactics and people's involvement in community development initiatives have a big impact. The null hypothesis is thus disproved.

Table 5: Regression analysis of how using lobbying tactics affects involvement in community development initiatives

Source of variation	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	1248.053	1	1248.053	5.905	.000 ^b
Residual	50427.842	399	53.082		
Total	50475.895	340			

R=.101, $R^2 = .010$. Adj $R^2 = .010$, Std Error= 7.295

Hypothesis three

In Southern Cross River State, advertising tactics have little effect on people's involvement in community development initiatives. The use of advertising technique is the independent variable in this hypothesis, while community development project involvement, as assessed over time, is the dependent variable. Simple regression analysis was employed to evaluate this hypothesis, and the results, as shown in Table 6, indicated that $R=.378$ a positive correlation between the employment of advertising methods and community development project involvement. In other words, people are more likely to participate in community development initiatives when advertising tactics are used more frequently. Subsequent study revealed that the Adj $R^2 = .138$, meaning that the use of advertising methods can account for 13.8% of the variation in people's engagement in community development projects. Furthermore, a detailed examination of the analysis of variance (ANOVA) table revealed that ($F=153.72$ $p>.05$) despite the fact that the percentage contribution of the use of advertising methods was minor. Because $p (.05)$ is greater than $p (.000)$. This suggests that the use of advertising techniques has a big impact on people's involvement in community development initiatives. The null hypothesis is thus disproved.

Table 6: Simple regression analysis of the influence of utilization of advertisement strategies on participation in community development projects

Source of variation	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	7029.992	1	7029.992	153.720	.05 ^b
Residual	43445.903	399	45.733		
Total	50475.895	340			

R=.378, R²= .139. Adj R² = .138, Std Error= 6.75

Discussion of findings

The first hypothesis, which claimed that the use of lyrical methods had no discernible impact on involvement in community development initiatives, was disproved. This suggests that engagement in community development initiatives is influenced by the use of lyrical methods. One possible explanation for this could be that the use of songs as a tactic gives the locals incisive information by utilizing dialects and regional languages. This might possibly be because town criers, a traditional form of communication, are crucial in this area. Additionally, he describes community engagement as a strategy and outcome of community mobilization via conventional communication methods.

The study's results are consistent with those of Abiodun (2022) conducted an empirical study on connection between community development project involvement and mobilization using lyrics technique was conducted by Conducted a study on Mobilisation strategies (Development information network, community education, popular theatre and age grade) and project partnership (initiation, planning and designing, funding, execution, monitoring and evaluation) predict sustainability of self-help projects in Oyo, Ogun and Ondo states of Southwestern Nigeria.

A study on the connection between community development project involvement and mobilization using lyrics technique was conducted by Kwashabawa (2020) conducted a study on advocacy strategy in relation to community participation in decision-making in North-West zone, Nigeria. Two research questions and a hypothesis guided the study. The research design used for the study was correlational survey with a population of 21,230 Universal Basic Education (UBE) schools and their School-Based Management Committees (SBMCs) in the North- west Zone. The study found that, advocacy strategy was moderately effective in North-west Zone basic schools, and that, there was no significant

relationship between advocacy strategy and community participation in decision-making in the basic schools. Meaning that, advocacy strategy was not a predictor of community participation in decision-making in basic schools.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The study's results and summary led to the conclusion that the use of lyric and advertising methods affects community development project involvement.

The study's summary and conclusions led to the following recommendations.

- i. Community development educators encourage people to fully participate in community development initiatives, lyrics that use local languages and dialects should be promoted by community leaders for effective implementation.
- ii. Community development officers Promotion of advertising tactics should be encouraged in order to investigate every possibility for raising public awareness of the necessity of encouraging active involvement in community projects.
- iii. Community leaders should raise awareness of the importance of active engagement in developmental projects; the community should be updated on the activities of the ongoing projects through campaigns or mass education.

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